



Image

46
APR

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN



T. DANIEL
LEUNG
CONRAD
T. BOYER

image[®] COMICS PRESENTS:

"REVENGE"



story

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Spawn #43 Summary:

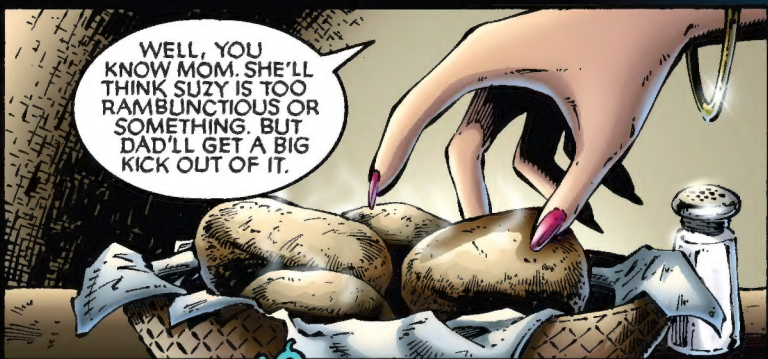
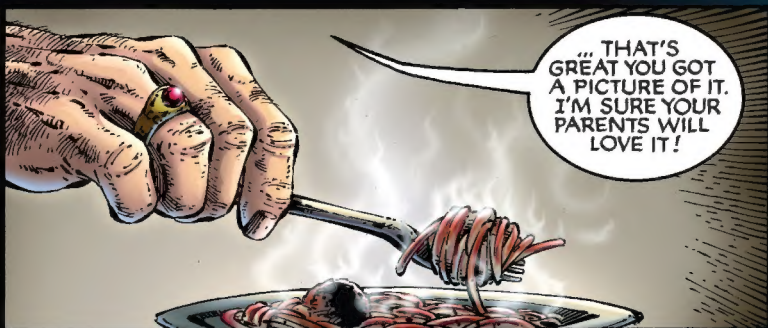
Tiffany and Spawn continue their battle. Denying defeat, this new angel knows decapitating Spawn will immediately see her promotion to flight level one. A feat never achieved by any angel. Spawn's internal neuro-systems release an explosion of pure, malicious energy which taints Tiffany. This attracts the evil animals of the night who come to Spawn's defense. It appears that Tiffany has been eaten alive. Meanwhile back in New York, detective Burke, realizing himself and his partner, Williams, may never be reinstated by the police force, shares with his partner his dream of opening his own detective agency. Wanda visits her doctor learning she only battles strep throat, and fears that she has passed her cough onto Terry who has been working late every night. Spawn finally returns to New York where he encounters Cog. Cog warns Spawn that he must gain control of his costume. It is morphing too rapidly and if Spawn cannot regain his power as its master, the costume will take ultimate control.

FOR IMAGE COMICS
LARRY MARDER - exec. director

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'EVENING, JOHNNY. MR. GRAVANO WANTS TO HAVE A LITTLE **MEETING** WITH YOU. SAYS I SHOULD ARRANGE IT... WITH YOUR PERMISSION, OF COURSE.

HE'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT YOUR CURRENT WORK HABITS.



LOOK, BOYS. THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE. I CAN EXPLAIN EVERYTHING.



GOOD.

IT'S JUST THAT I'M **BUSY** RIGHT NOW. WITH THE NEW BABY AND ALL. YOU UNDERSTAND.



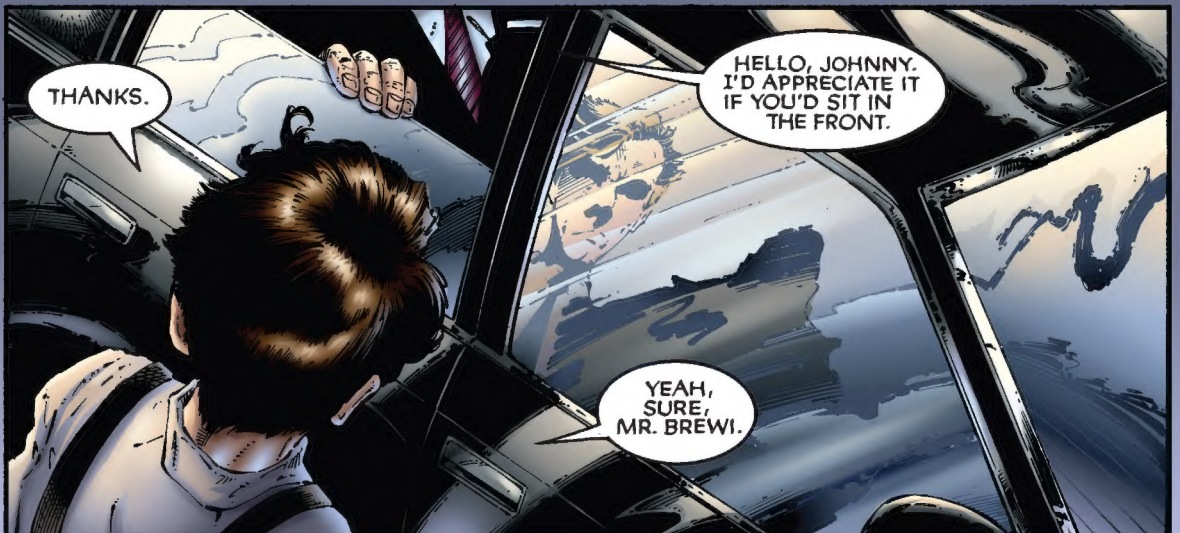
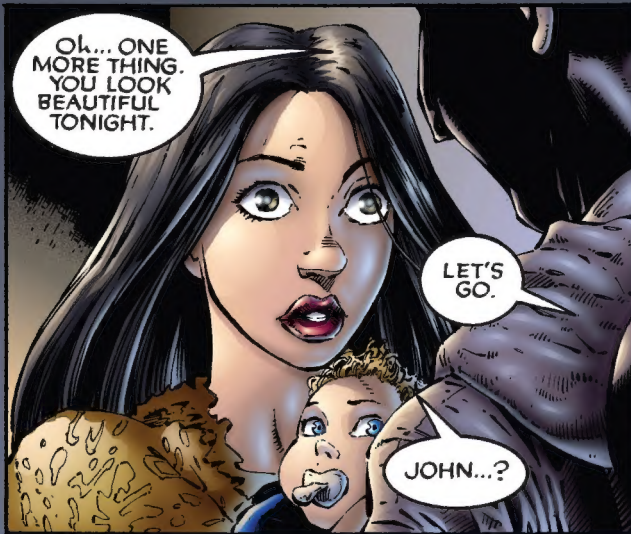
I DO. TOO BAD, THOUGH. MR. GRAVANO WILL BE DISAPPOINTED.



VERY DISAPPOINTED.



OKAY. BUT NOT HERE. NOT IN FRONT OF MY WIFE AND KID.



A MINUTE
PASSES.

WHY'RE
WE JUST
SITTING
HERE?

JOHNNY TORRENZO'S
WIFE RUSHES OUTSIDE.
SHE'S HEARD THE SOUND
BEFORE-- KNOWS ITS
MEANING.

IT'LL BE A FULL TWENTY
MINUTES BEFORE THE
NEIGHBORS CALM HER
HYSTERICS. ANOTHER
HOUR BEFORE SHE
STOPS CRYING.

THE POLICE WON'T
BE GIVEN ENOUGH
INFORMATION TO DO
THEM ANY GOOD.

AND THE
BLOOD-SOAKED
SIDEWALK WILL
EVENTUALLY
FADE BUT
NEVER QUITE
LOSE ITS STAIN.



WE'VE DONE
THAT ERRAND FOR
YOU, MR. GRAVANO...
LEFT THE BODY RIGHT
WHERE YOU SAID.
AT THE HOME.

PERFECT.
THE OTHERS IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD WILL
GET MY SUBTLE
MESSAGE. JOHNNY
WAS WAY TOO **STUPID**
TO BE STEALING FROM
ME ON HIS OWN. HE
HAD HELP--AND MOST
OF HIS GROUP LIVES
IN THAT AREA.



NOW THEY
KNOW I'M
WATCHING... AND
SOMEONE
ALWAYS
PANICS.



I WANT YOU TO BE THERE WHEN THEY DO. JOHNNY'S NOT GOING TO TAKE THIS FALL ALL BY HIMSELF.



IT'S A PITY, REALLY. I HAD SUCH HOPES FOR JOHNNY. STILL, WE ALL HAVE OUR OBLIGATIONS. HE **FORGOT** HIS.

YES, SIR.



LOOK AFTER THE PROPER ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIS FUNERAL-- AND EXPRESS MY CONDOLENCES TO HIS WIFE.



LET HER KNOW THAT SHE AND THE BABY WILL BE WELL TAKEN CARE OF. I ALWAYS PROVIDE FOR MY 'FAMILY.'



YES?

I AM PHONING ON BEHALF OF MR. BARTINO. HE HAS ASKED ME TO REMIND YOU THAT YOU WERE TO HAVE RETURNED HIS PROPERTY BY NOW.



MR. BARTINO DOES NOT APPRECIATE TARDINESS, AS I'M SURE YOU ARE AWARE.

YOU SEE, MR. GRAVANO, IN SICILY HAVE OUR OWN CODE OF HONOR... ONE WHICH DOES NOT TEMPT THE FATES. WE EXPECT THE PROMPT RETURN OF OVERTKILL. DO NOT DISAPPOINT US. GOODBYE.



EVERY DEVIL HAS ITS MASTER. VITO GRAVANO HAS JUST BEEN REMINDED THAT HE IS NO EXCEPTION.

THEY'D BEEN BROUGHT
TO THE REEKING ALLEYWAY
FOR A PURPOSE:

TO GIVE HIM **STRENGTH**.
TO ACT AS A CATALYST,
INDUCING THE FREE
FLOW OF **BLACK**
ENERGY TO AID IN HIS
RECOVERY.

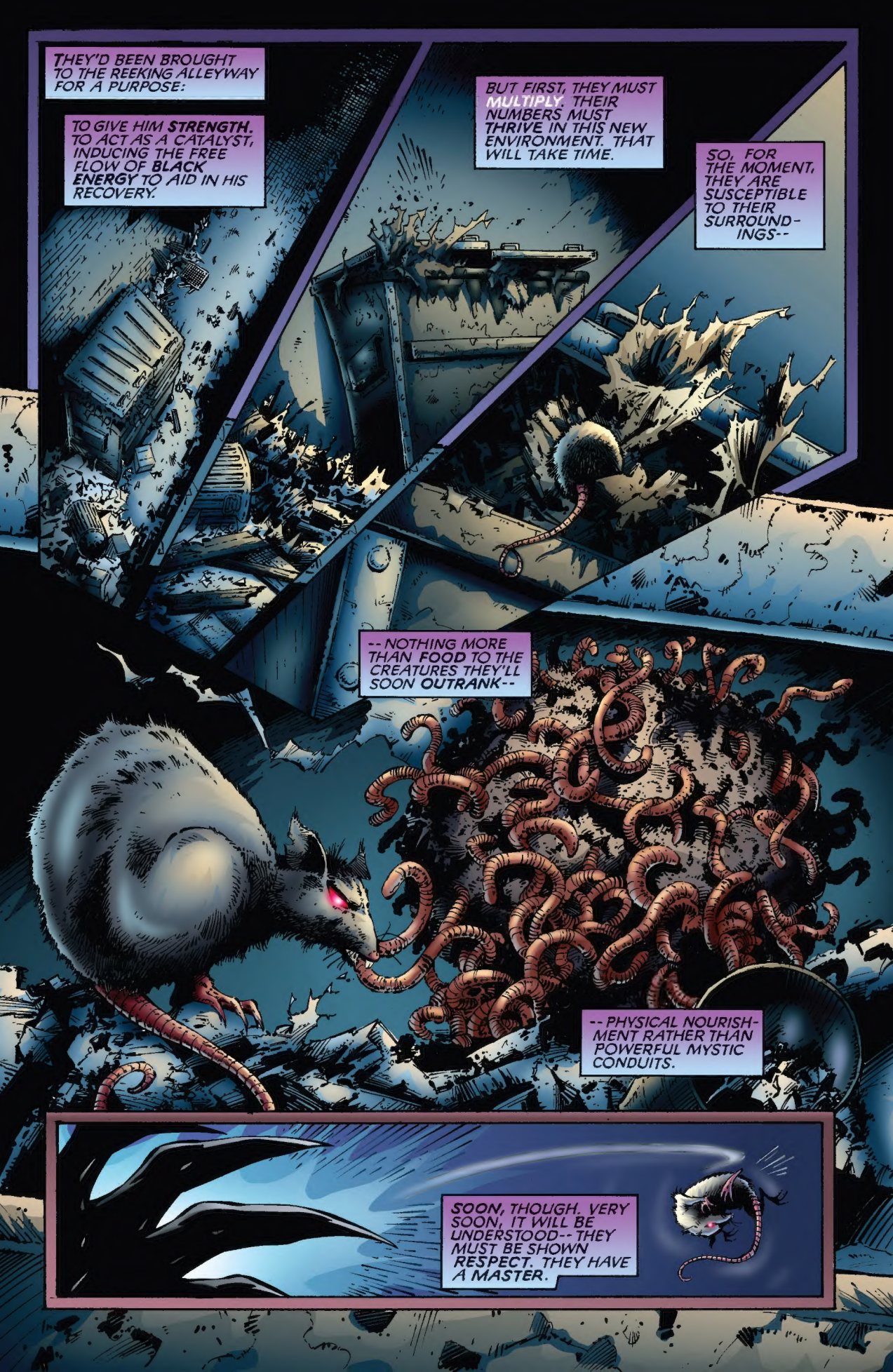
BUT FIRST, THEY MUST
MULTIPLY. THEIR
NUMBERS MUST
THRIVE IN THIS NEW
ENVIRONMENT. THAT
WILL TAKE TIME.


SO, FOR
THE MOMENT,
THEY ARE
SUSCEPTIBLE
TO THEIR
SURROUND-
INGS--

-- NOTHING MORE
THAN FOOD TO THE
CREATURES THEY'LL
SOON OUTRANK--

-- PHYSICAL NOURISH-
MENT RATHER THAN
POWERFUL MYSTIC
CONDUITS.

SOON, THOUGH. VERY
SOON, IT WILL BE
UNDERSTOOD-- THEY
MUST BE SHOWN
RESPECT. THEY HAVE
A MASTER.





OVER TWO HUNDRED MILES
THE LIVING COSTUME HAD
CARRIED THEM, HIDDEN IN THE
FOLDS OF ITS BLOOD-RED CLOAK,
EVER CAREFUL TO CRADLE THEM
IN A BED OF DARK, RICH SOIL.

THEY CARRY A
RESOURCE
ESSENTIAL TO
ITS CONTINUED
EXISTENCE...

... AND THAT OF ITS
HOST, THE LATE
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL
AL SIMMONS:

EVIL. THE WORMS HAVE
ALWAYS BEEN THE MOST
EFFECTIVE SPONGES FOR
IT. DWELLING UNDER-
GROUND, HIDDEN FROM
GOD'S LIGHT, THEY
ABSORB THE AURA OF
WICKEDNESS.

IN THESE GENTLE BURROWERS,
THE DEVIL FOUND A BACK-
DOOR INTO GOD'S CREATION.
THEY DRAW NOURISHMENT
FROM THE SOIL ALONE-- THEY
HAVE NO USE FOR THE SUN--

-- SO THEY HAVE
NEVER BEEN
TAINTED.

THEY ARE, IN
EFFECT,
BOTTLED SIN.

HEY,
LARRY!
LOOK--

--ITS... ITS--
**OH HOLY
MOTHER!!**

RUN!!

THE MASTER OF
THE NIGHT-
CRAWLERS FEEDS
CONTINUALLY
NOW, SLOWLY
DRAINING EACH
WORM OF ITS
DARK NECTAR.

THE HELLSPAWN-- WHICH
IS TO SAY, HIS OUTER SHELL--
IS REBUILDING STRENGTH
LOST AS A RESULT OF THEIR
BRUTAL SEPARATION. *

* ISSUE 40 --TOM--

AT THE SAME TIME,
AT THE CORE OF
THEIR UNION, HOST
AND SYMBIOTE
ARE IN A STRUGGLE
FOR SUPREMACY.

IT'S THAT CONDITION
WHICH INTERESTS
ANOTHER OF THE
ALLEY'S RESIDENTS.

QUEENS, NEW YORK... THE HOME OF AL'S WIDOW...

WELL, ACCORDING TO THIS, EVERYTHING SHOULD BE APPROVED BY NEXT WEEK.

WE'LL HAVE THE FINAL PERMITS IN HAND, ALLOWING US TO START BUILDING THE CHILDRENS' WING. I CAN'T BELIEVE IT-- AFTER ALL THIS TIME, IT'S ACTUALLY GOING TO HAPPEN!

IT'LL MEAN SO MUCH TO THE HOSPITAL-- NOT TO MENTION OUR VOLUNTEERS. I THINK A FEW PEOPLE WERE BEGINNING TO DOUBT...

DADDY!
DADDY! DA-DA!

I'M SORRY, SWEETIE. DADDY WON'T BE HOME FOR A WHILE.

WRONG.

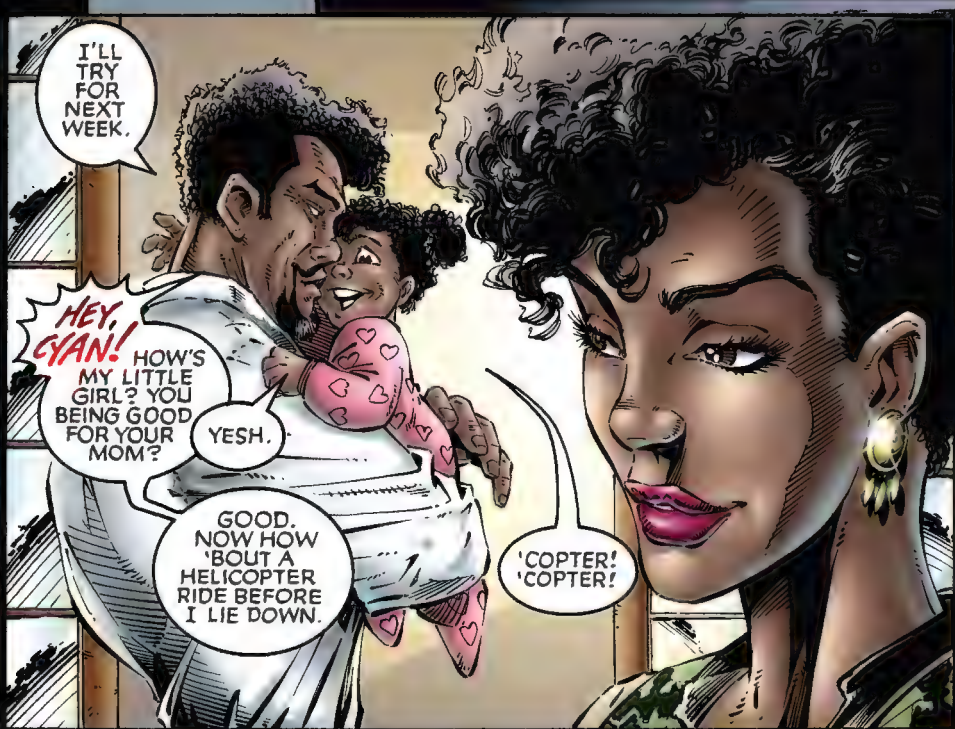
TERRY?!
WHY ARE YOU HERE?

I STILL FEEL LIKE CRAP. CAN'T SEEM TO SHAKE THIS FLU.

DR. BUSCINO KEEPS ASKING YOU TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT.

I KNOW, I KNOW. I JUST HAVEN'T HAD THE TIME.

DAD-DA!
DAD-DA!
DAD-DA!



A FEW NIGHTS
LATER.

HIS NAME IS CHRIS
PRONGER, BUT THOSE
WHO KNOW HIM USE
A DIFFERENT NAME:

'ORCA.'

SEE YA
'ROUND,
EDDIE.

Jimmy's SPORTS BAR
AND GRILL

BUILT LIKE A WHALE
AND ONE HELL OF
A KILLER.

KILLER WHALE.
ORCA. GET IT?

PLENTY OF
VICTIMS HAVE.
THAT'S WHY HE'S
BECOME SO
VALUABLE TO
VITO GRAVANO.

HE FOLLOWS ORDERS
WITH SKILL AND
PRECISION.

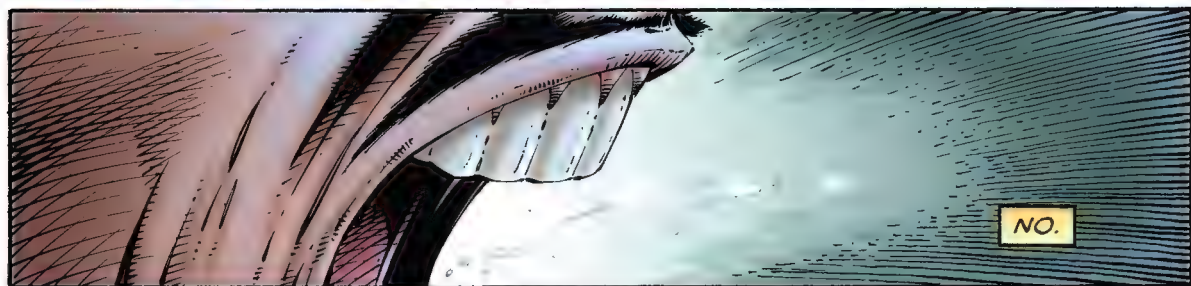
HE NEVER
LEAVES ANY
LOOSE ENDS.

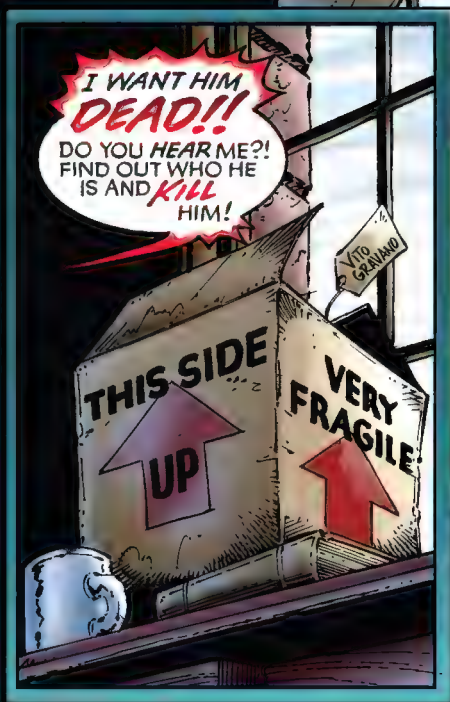
HE'S LONG SINCE
LOST TRACK OF
THE BODY COUNT.

HIS 'HIT' ON
JOHNNY PASQUALI
WAS JUST
ANOTHER GIG.

WHA...?

WHATEVER
THE NUMBER,
IT'S JUST
BEEN CAPPED.





"HOW DO YOU **KNOW** SHE WAS DEAD?"

"BELIEVE ME, **SHE WAS DEAD.** THE ANIMALS STRIPPED HER BONES OF PRACTICALLY ALL FLESH. SHE'S GONE."

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN, **HER BONES?**"

HER SKELETON. IT WAS STREWN ALL OVER THE PLACE.

YOU **STILL** DON'T GET IT, DO YOU? YOU DIDN'T KILL ANY ANGEL. * SHE'S STILL ALIVE.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

* LAST ISSUE
--Tom.

MAYBE SHE'S ALREADY HERE WAITING FOR YOU. AS A BUM. A HOOKER. A DOG. ANYTHING. AND YOU'D NEVER KNOW IT.

SO NOW WHAT?

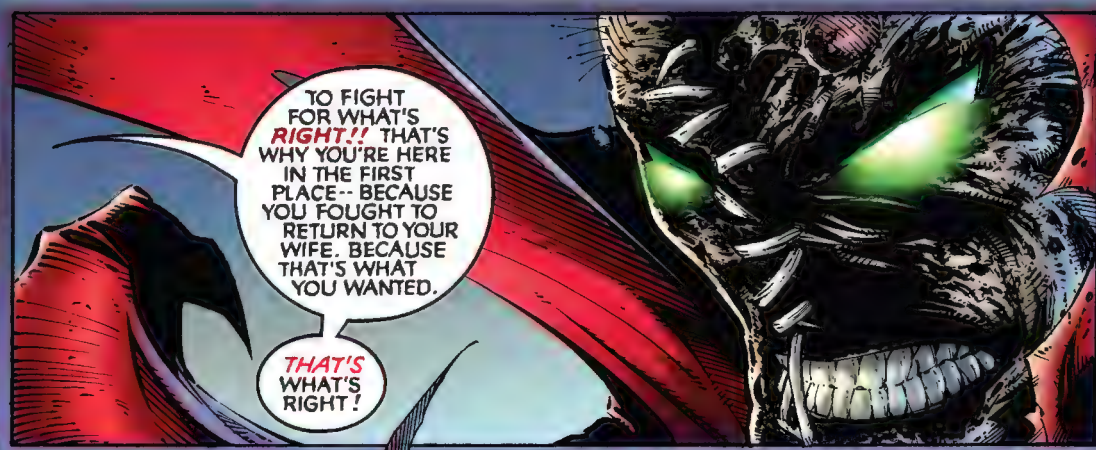
ANGELS DON'T **HAVE** BONES. THEY'RE LIKE YOU-- MADE OF SOME KIND OF **PLASM**. THE ONLY WAY TO VANQUISH ONE OF THEM IS TO ABSORB THEIR **LIGHT**, WHICH YOU DIDN'T DO.

WHAT'S WORSE, SHE COULD BE ANYWHERE. YOU SEE, THEY SHAPE-SHIFT. AND BECAUSE OF YOUR NECROPLASM'S EMISSIONS, SHE CAN FIND YOU IN A **HEARTBEAT**.

Oh, FOR THE **LOVE OF PETE!!** **LEARN**, DAMMIT, YOU'RE A **SPAWN** NOW. AS MUCH AS YOU'D LIKE TO BE HUMAN AGAIN, THAT'S **LONG GONE**. PEOPLE, CREATURES, THINGS, HEAVEN ITSELF -- THEY'RE ALL GUNNING FOR YOU. IF ONE FAILS, ANOTHER PICKS UP THE SLACK.


BUT YOU KEEP THINKING SMALL. IGNORING THE SIGNS. YOU'RE CAUGHT IN A **GAME**, AL, ONE YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY CONTROL. HEAVEN, HELL-- **THEY** RUN THE SHOW. US ON EARTH, WE'RE JUST THE MIDDLEMEN.

SO WHAT'S THE POINT?




TO FIGHT FOR WHAT'S **RIGHT!!** THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE-- BECAUSE YOU FOUGHT TO RETURN TO YOUR WIFE. BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT YOU WANTED.

THAT'S WHAT'S RIGHT!



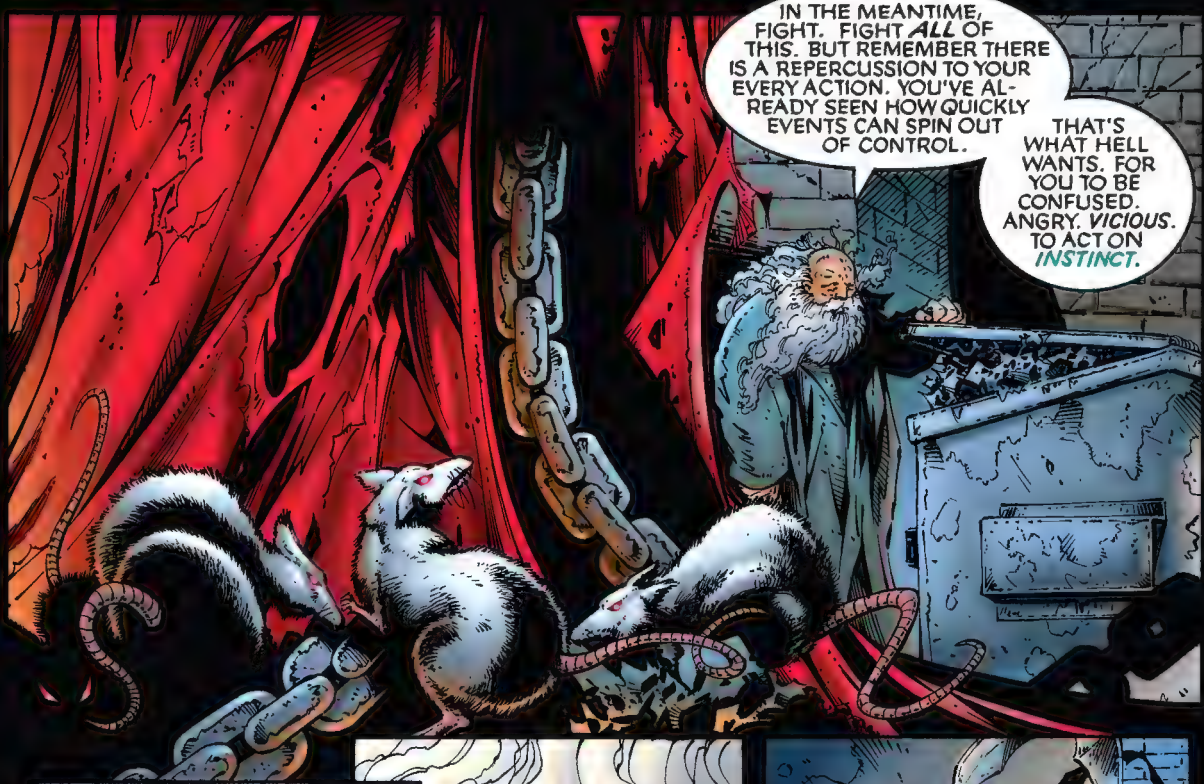
WHAT ABOUT THE REST? TERRY. VIOLATOR. ANGELA. EVEN JASON WYNN-- WHO, YOU SAID, MIGHT NOT BE THE ONE WHO ORDERED MY DEATH. WHAT ARE THEY?

PIECES TO THE PUZZLE. YOU CAN'T DETERMINE WHAT TO FIGHT FOR UNLESS YOU HAVE ANSWERS. EACH OF THEM CAN PROVIDE YOU SOME.



LISTEN, COG, EVERY TIME I TRY AND CATCH MY BREATH, SOMETHING NEW'S ATTACKING. I'M A MAN, THOUGH YOU CAN TELL ME OTHERWISE. WELL, THAT'S ALL I HAVE LEFT, AND IF I STOP BELIEVING THAT, I SWEAR I'LL CRACK.

THEN DON'T.



IN THE MEANTIME, FIGHT. FIGHT **ALL** OF THIS. BUT REMEMBER THERE IS A REPERCUSSION TO YOUR EVERY ACTION. YOU'VE ALREADY SEEN HOW QUICKLY EVENTS CAN SPIN OUT OF CONTROL.

THAT'S WHAT HELL WANTS. FOR YOU TO BE CONFUSED. ANGRY. VICIOUS. TO ACT ON **INSTINCT**.



SO FAR, YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING RIGHT INTO THE DEVIL'S HANDS.

LIKE THESE **WORMS**. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY'RE FOR?



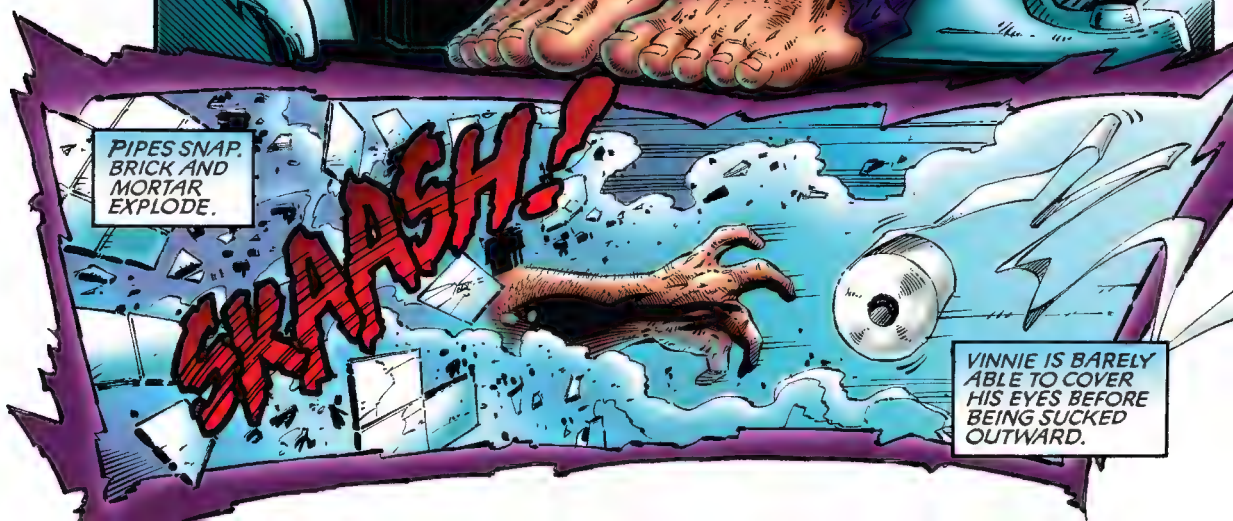
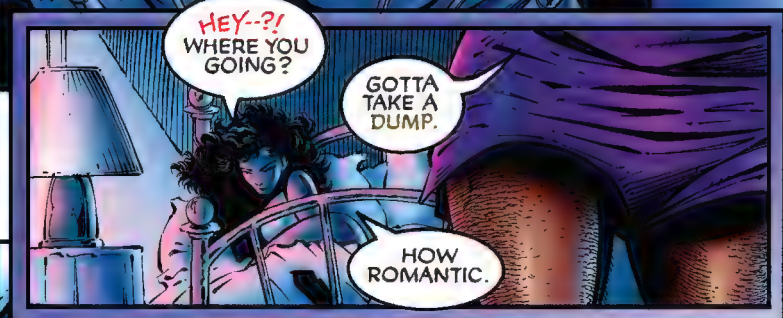
TO SIPHON EVIL! **THAT'S** WHAT YOUR COSTUME'S DOING.



I-- I **NEED** THEM.

YES, YOU DO-- BUT NOT **THIS** WAY. NOT WHILE YOUR UNIFORM IS CALLING THE SHOTS.

YOU WANT TO BE A MAN. THEN OPEN YOUR EYES AND **LEARN**.



BEFORE THE DUST
SETTLES, HE HEARS IT.
THE **MONSTER**. ITS LOW
GROWLS. LIKE SOME
RAGING BULL. THEN HE
FEELS ITS **BREATH** ON
THE BACK OF HIS NECK.

HE'S NOT SURE HE
SHOULD LOOK UP,
BECAUSE WHATEVER
HORROR IT IS HOVERING
OVER HIM DOESN'T
SMELL EVEN **REMOTELY**
HUMAN.

MAKE
ONE SOUND
AND I'LL SKIN
YOU WHERE
YOU STAND.

VINNIE BOLBANI
BITES HIS LIPS
SO HARD THEY
BLEED.

WORD IS
YOU HAVE THE
INFORMATION
I'M LOOKING
FOR.

ALMOST TO THE
POINT OF SCREAMING,
HE CATCHES HIMSELF--
AND INSTEAD DEPOSITS
ANOTHER 'PARCEL' IN
THE TOILET BOWL.



HE'S RIGHT.
HE DIDN'T.

SEE, THREATS
AND TORTURE
CAN BE VERY
COMPELLING. YOU
REMEMBER THAT,
DON'T YOU,
VITO?

HOW YOU GOT TO
ME BY THREATENING
MY FAMILY. YOU
AND YOUR DAMN
SCIENTISTS, TRYING
TO BUILD YOUR
'PERFECT
HITMAN.'

AND EVEN
AFTER YOU
HAD ME. EVEN
AFTER I SAID I'D
DO IT, YOU KILLED
THEM! MY WIFE,
MY KIDS. EVERYONE,
JUST SO YOU
COULD PROTECT
YOUR ASS.

WELL,
NOW IT'S
PAY-
BACK!!

NOT QUITE,
RICHARD. I KNEW
YOU'D RETURN SOME-
DAY. SO I PLANNED
AHEAD. YOUR BROTHER
DAVID-- HE'S *STILL ALIVE*
AND I KNOW
WHERE HE IS...

... AND,
BETTER YET, HE'S
TO BE SLAUGHTERED
IF ANYTHING WERE
TO HAPPEN TO ME.

KRAK!

LIKE A CREATURE
MAULING MEEEE

UMPH!!

LIAR!
DAVID'S
DEAD.





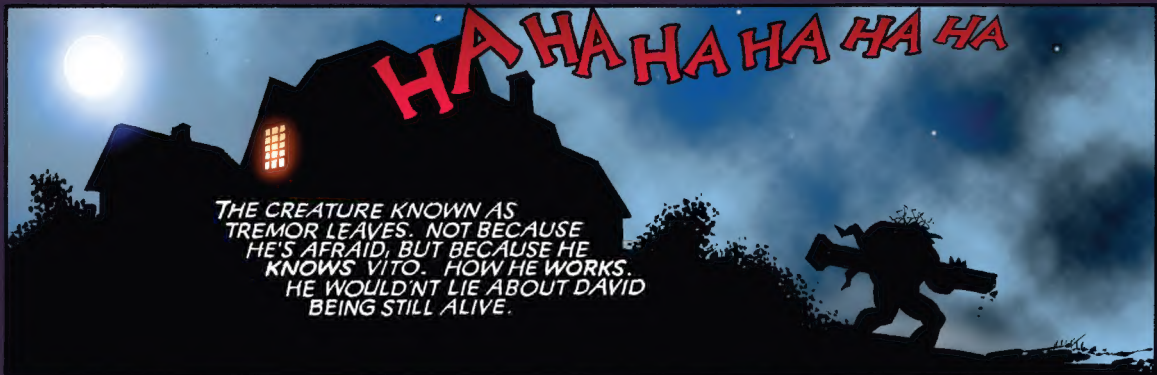
EVEN WHEN YOU
WORKED FOR ME I KNEW
YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE
BACKBONE.

**I SAID
SHUT
UP!!**

WHOOO...

YOU'RE A
FAILURE, RICHARD!
YOU COULDN'T DO
YOUR **JOB**, OR PROTECT
YOUR **FAMILY...** YOU
EVEN **SCREWED UP**
OUR **EXPERIMENT!**

**THIS
ISN'T
OVER, VITO.
I'LL BE
BACK.**



HA HA HA HA HA HA

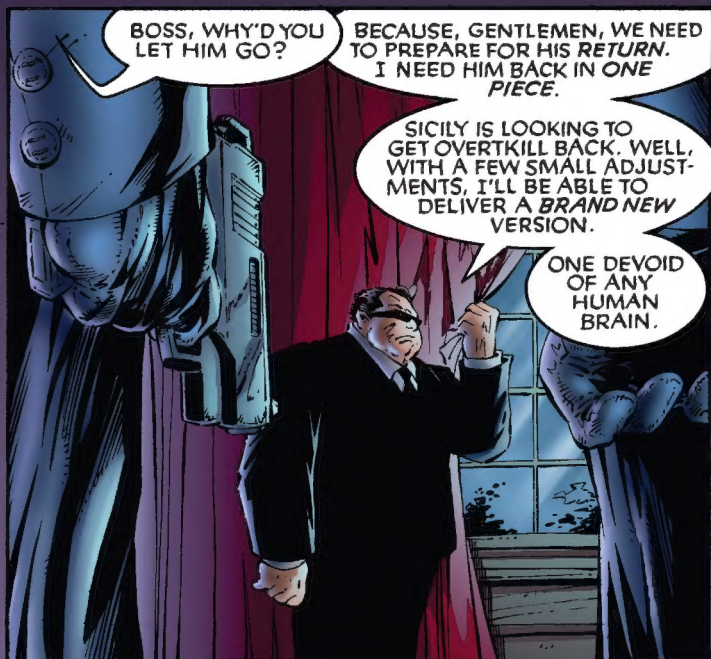
THE CREATURE KNOWN AS
TREMOR LEAVES. NOT BECAUSE
HE'S AFRAID, BUT BECAUSE HE
KNOWS VITO. HOW HE WORKS.
HE WOULDN'T LIE ABOUT DAVID
BEING STILL ALIVE.



SO HE NEEDS TIME TO
THINK. TO PLAN. BEFORE
COMING BACK FOR VITO.

VINNIE IS GOING
TO HELP HIM.

Oh, GOD.
Oh, GOD.
Oh, GOD.



BOSS, WHY'D YOU
LET HIM GO?

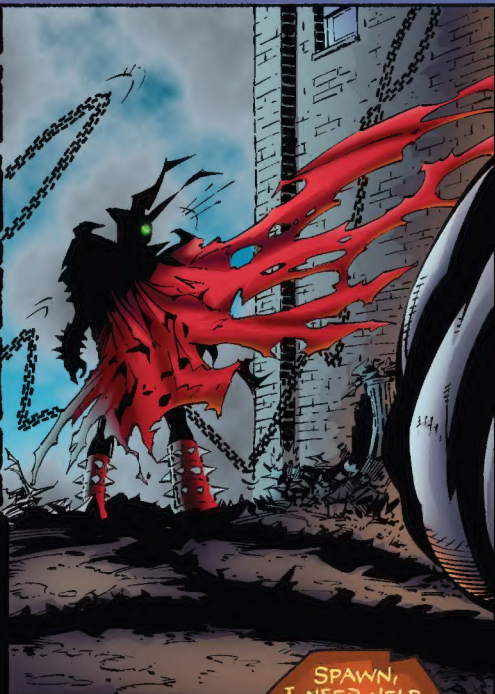
BECAUSE, GENTLEMEN, WE NEED
TO PREPARE FOR HIS RETURN.
I NEED HIM BACK IN ONE
PIECE.

SICILY IS LOOKING TO
GET OVERTKILL BACK. WELL,
WITH A FEW SMALL ADJUST-
MENTS, I'LL BE ABLE TO
DELIVER A **BRAND NEW**
VERSION.

ONE DEVOID
OF ANY
HUMAN
BRAIN.



Oh, GOD.
Oh, GOD.



SPAWN,
I NEED HELP.
YOURS.



WHERE
DO YOU GET
OFF...?!

QUIET!
VITO IS MY PROBLEM,
I KNOW, BUT I THOUGHT
YOU'D BE INTERESTED
IN HEARING A FEW
NAMES FROM VINNIE
HERE. HE'S A FOUNTAIN
OF KNOWLEDGE.

WHAT WERE
THOSE NAMES
AGAIN,
VINNIE?



WANDA BLAKE.
TERRY FITZGERALD.
CYAN FITZGERALD.
JASON WYNN.

THAT'S
ENOUGH.

SO
WHAT DO YOU
SAY NOW...
PARTNER.





Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE